

Mary Waitt

August 11, 2015

195 Washington St.

Vernon, CT

860-872-9541

My name is Mary Waitt

I am the mother of Heather Waitt a brain injury survivor and a member of the Legislator advisory committee for brain injury.

I have come here to ask that you not make the changes to the ABI waiver that you are discussing today. The change that does need to be made is a pay raise for the ILST. There has only been one small raise in pay in 18 years. My daughter's agency and many of the agencies can no longer find caregivers to provide services under the waiver because of the poor hourly rate. The agencies overhead costs continue to rise but the reimbursement rate has not changed which then makes them lower the hourly rate for their employees. No one should have to work without a raise in pay for eighteen years and this year our ILST actually took a cut in pay. In the last year it has been a constant struggle and a constant worry that there isn't sufficient staff to fill our daughter's needs. In fact a week rarely goes by that there isn't a gap in her care and we her parents are asked to fill in for the staff. This negatively impacts both Heather and her program and my husband and my professional and personal lives.

We have brought this subject before you many times and unfortunately the other changes in the waiver have taken precedence. Without an increase in the pay there will come a time when there will be no providers to fill the needs of the brain injured.

The Advisory committee that was put in place for discussing the problems and changes of the ABI Waiver is not giving the family members and other committee members the opportunity to educate and give our legislators a good picture of the problems and challenges the brain injured and their families face every day. The appointed members need to be able to guide this committee in this direction but are not being allowed that opportunity. We need a change in format to allow our voices to be heard.

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